

AN

# ANCIENT LANDMARK,

OR

THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENT OF CIVIL AND  
RELIGIOUS LIBERTY:

DEDICATED

TO THE

## Y O U N G M E N

OF

## NEW-ENGLAND.

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BY A PASTOR.

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1838.

TO THE  
***YOUNG MEN***

OF

**NEW-ENGLAND;**

THE SONS OF THE PURITANS; THE FOLLOWING PAGES ARE RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED, BY THEIR FRIEND AND SERVANT,

**A PASTOR.**

**"REMOVE NOT THE ANCIENT LANDMARK WHICH THY FATHERS HAVE SET."**—*Solomon.*

The Rev. Mr. Bird, Missionary from Syria, recently related a fact in reference to a devout Roman Catholic, who had been extensively engaged as a pirate on the high seas. He had been accessory to the murder of many human beings; but he had been strictly brought up in the forms of the church—he had never neglected his forms of religion amid all his indulgence in crime. One day he was dining with a co-partner in crime, who helped him very bountifully to a piece of meat, when the pirate exclaimed with a great deal of apparent sanctity, "*God forbid that I should eat meat on Friday.*"

A few years ago, a number of Roman Catholics were engaged in digging the canal that runs from W. through S. to S., and during my visit to the latter place, one of their number died. I had some curiosity to follow the procession into the grave yard, to witness the manner of their burial. It was really a solemn and impressive sight. The Priest seemed clothed in the very garment of religion itself, while he performed the obsequies of the dead. If I did not believe in a restoration from purgatory, it was not from want of imposing temptation. Their in the retired mansions of the dead, while the Priest was uttering his solemn theology, a circle of his devout followers all knelt around the opened grave, engaged in the solemn duty of prayer. At length the Rev. Priest said amen! and they all rose and left the grave yard, and within two hours time, they were around a grog shop as noisy as bedlam.

ites, in a state of intoxication. Their forms of religion had an imposing appearance, but what were they in the sight of Him, who sees through the disguise and searches the hidden elements of the heart? And what are all forms of religion without its spirit and power? It is true in our churches ordinarily, we do not see the awful contrast from the mock solemnity of such forms, to the brutal degradation of real life; but where there is nothing *but the form* of religion, we may be as guilty, yea, more guilty in the sight of God, from the increased beams of light that shine around our path.

Where there is nothing but the form of religion, our churches stand as false beacons to heaven, and the ministers as false sentinels of religious freedom. The members are not the salt of the earth, nor the light of the world. While the forms are maintained, the reforming and purifying principles of religion are not urged on the acceptance of depraved man, and the church makes but little progress toward the day of her redemption and the conversion of the world. Thus we see that the forms are of but little utility, while its essential elements are not in practical operation.

*So we may have all the forms of republican freedom, and yet be deprived of its real spirit and protecting power.* Civil government is of divine origin; we read that the powers that be, are ordained of God, and that the magistrate bears not the sword in vain. By the sword we understand the power of protection on the one hand, and of punishment on the other. Every man lawfully placed in the office of civil government, is in the place God ordained him to fill, and there is a most solemn responsibility resting upon him, not only to the people of the govern-

ment, but to God who ordained it; a solemn responsibility to maintain the supremacy of law, and thus secure the order, rights and happiness of the people, and prevent lawless violence; and there are most solemn and important duties resting on the people, to respect and sustain civil officers in the legitimate exercise of their authority, for the Bible says, whoever resisteth the power, (civil officer), resisteth the ordinances of God. For rulers are not a terror to good works but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power, for he is a minister of God to thee for good; but if thou do that which is evil be afraid, for he beareth not the sword in vain, for he is a minister (civil officer) of God; a revenger to execute punishment upon him that doeth evil.—Rom. 13<sup>4</sup> Whoever, therefore, resists civil rulers in the legitimate exercise of their authority, violates the precepts of the Bible, and sins against God. What the legitimate exercise of their authority is, every man must satisfy himself by a knowledge of the constitution and the laws of the land; and while civil rulers are acting within the defined limits of their authority, we are bound to respect, sustain, and support them—we are bound to do it as a religious duty, for God has commanded it.

If the people did not sustain them, they would act against their own good and their own professed intentions; for what is the power of a civil officer? It is the exact power and no more that the people put into his hands, and they surely would resist their own power, if they resisted the power they put voluntarily into the hands of their rulers. Our civil rulers have no irresponsible power, for that is despotism. Their power is defined and granted by the people. We the people are the kings, and civil officers are our servants, and they must exercise the power

and execute the laws that we the people have made. If our civil officers exceed the limits of the authority that the people have granted them, in any particular course they may pursue, "then they travel out of the record"; they exceed the limits of the constitution, and their authority then becomes mere advice, and the same respect is to be paid to their advice that is paid to the advice of any individual. It should be examined in a candid spirit at the bar of private judgment, and if it is good, thank them for the advice and follow it, but if not good, let it return to them in peace. But as long as our civil rulers exercise the exact power defined and granted in the constitution, we are under solemn obligation to obey and sustain them; for the authority of God, and our own interests demand it. It ought to be a part of every man's religion to sustain a good government. The blessings of civil liberty cannot be too highly appreciated. The genuine nature of civil freedom should be an object of attentive study and warm attachment, and our unceasing prayers should ascend to heaven that the boon which our venerable fathers left us, may be preserved and transmitted to all coming generations.

But as in religion so in government, we may have the forms of liberty without the practical operation of its essential element. We may have the rights of universal suffrage, and the rights of choosing our own rulers. Every man may be eligible to civil office on the same condition. We may have our executive powers balanced and restrained by the legislative, and both regulated by the judicial, and all the forms of a republican government may roll on in their usual order, while the *essential spirit of liberty* may not be enjoyed. Let there be restrictions placed on the rights of free discussion, and the spirit of lib-

erty is gone—Government is then a body without a soul—a cadaverous carcase without the enlivening spirit—a consolidated power to oppress and not to protect.

In article 1st. sections 5 and 6 of our constitution, it reads .  
 “Every citizen may freely speak, write and publish his sentiments on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of that liberty.” No law shall ever be passed to curtail or restrain the liberty of speech or the press.”

For some reason or other, unrestricted discussion has been guaranteed to all the citizens of this country. I do not by any means pretend to determine, what were the reasons in the minds of the framers of our excellent constitution, for conferring the right of free discussion to all the citizens of this country—but my purpose is to show that *as a matter of fact* it is the essential element of freedom, Whether the framers of the constitution had this view of the matter, or whether they intended to secure other benefits, that we who have never searched very deeply into the science of political economy do not comprehend—we pretend not to determine. But it awakens no little gratitude in our hearts, and excites no little veneration for their great names, that the principle in question secures all that is valuable in freedom, and manly and noble in religion. We wish to awaken the attention of our young men to the alarming fact, that the real spirit of liberty is fast departing from the country—while a cruel despotism is gathering strength under its forms. The stern republican virtues of our fathers, on whose sacred graves we tread, are fading away. A new and most terrible order of things is rising up in all parts of the country. It is not safe for a *freeman*, cherishing the principles of freedom, for *all* even to visit the capitol of the nation, for the demon

of petty despotism prowls around that monument of our nation's greatness. It is not safe for a freeman *who desires all to be free*, to peaceably travel in some parts of republican America; for unless he will deny the first principle of the constitution, he is liable to be seized, searched and whipped, and driven out of the state. The rights of free discussion conducted in the most unexceptionable manner, are frequently invaded. The press, the bulwark of liberty, the terror of despotism and corruption, has often been demolished. The sacred rights of petition have been denied or lightly treated. Mob violence has prostrated law and order, and in some places ascended the throne, and the image of republicanism become its footstool—ecclesiastical rights have been invaded—a most worthy minister of the gospel has been murdered in the exercise of his constitutional rights! Where, O where is the spirit of the puritans? God of all mercy! awaken that spirit if it has not clean gone from the land of the pilgrims! We believe it has not. We believe the spirit that sustained the martyred son of the puritans, amid the reckless fury of Alton, yet lingers on the hills of New England, and that our young men will cluster around the standard of liberty, and maintain its essential principles in their purity and protecting power.

*Section 1st. Under any form of government, unrestricted discussion is necessary to explain the nature of human rights, and secure their practical admission in the community.* Human rights are only another name for civil and religious liberty. What these rights are, how they are to be defined and applied, there is a great difference of opinion—and as long as there is difference of opinion about the nature and application of human rights, so



long it will be necessary to make them a matter of discussion. Whom shall we find to settle this question about human rights? Shall we appeal to the Pope? He will decide that all irresponsible power is lodged in his hands—that he is the vicerent of the Almighty, and that Thrones and States and Empires must bow and revolve around him, and it belongs to him to decide what, and how much the Church may believe, which generally amounts to this, that the Pope is infallible, and to believe to the contrary is to incur the dread sentence of damnation. What, said an enquirer to a son of the Pope, do you believe? Sure I believe what the Church does. And what does the Church believe? The Church believes what the Pope does. And what does the Pope believe? He believes what the Church does. And what do the Church and the Pope both believe? They both believe the same thing. We cannot consent to let the Pope decide the important question of human rights. Shall we appeal to the Kings and the Monarchs of the old world? They would annihilate the principle of universal suffrage at once, and gather up the civil power into their own hands, and decide on an established religion, and frown on the equality of men. Shall we appeal to our declaration of independence to ascertain what human rights are? Doubtless in the estimation of some, that would be a safe guide. But there are others in some parts of republican America who declare that the sentiment that all men are created equal, is only “a rhetorical flourish,” and was designed to make an impression till we had gained our independence, and then they intended to put in an exception to the general rule—(as most all rules have an exception), and have it read thus, “we the republicans of the United States of Ameri-

ca, hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal, *except as many of the colored people as we want for slaves.*"

What an inconvenient thing it is that the Africans should be considered men—accountable beings, and thus be a standing contradiction of the first principles of our declaration of independence.

We see then that the question of human rights is not yet settled, and all the umpires to whom we have appealed, have difference of opinion about human rights—how can this question be settled? There is nothing but the power of truth commending itself to every man's conscience that can settle this question. But how shall we arrive at the truth? In no other way than by free discussion. God has ordained patient, candid, unrestricted enquiry as the only means of arriving at truth, and finding the everlasting and unchangeable principles, which are the basis of his moral kingdom, and the guide of human conduct. The relation of things God himself has constituted. There is a clear and everlasting distinction between right and wrong, and God has made every human mind capable of seeing that distinction, and of arriving at the truth on all questions. God summons the powers of the mind by all that is valuable in two worlds, to seek after truth and rights, and when found, to love them and follow the leadings of their influence. In the language of inspiration, He speaks from heaven, "My son if thou incline thine ear unto wisdom and apply thine heart to understanding, yea, if thou criest after knowledge and liftest up thy voice for understanding—if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures, then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment and equity; yea and every

good work." This is the divine warrant for free discussion, and the divine direction for arriving at human duty and human rights; the essential principles of civil and religious liberty, as well as the knowledge of God. And when the great teacher appeared on earth, he said "if the truth shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

*Section 2d. Unrestricted discussion is the only means for the diffusion of that general intelligence which is necessary to secure the spirit of civil and religious liberty.* It has passed into a proverb that the spirit of a republican government cannot exist, neither can the purity and power of religion, without the diffusion of knowledge. So great is the ignorance of the body of the people in the old countries, that the intelligent few very naturally conclude that the people must be governed by the will of the rulers and not participate in the affairs of the government themselves. But in this country, we are trying an experiment in advance of the nations of the old world—an experiment on which they look with wonder and envy. That the principles of our constitution are true and that a republican government is the best in theory, at least, we sincerely believe. But a republican government pre-supposes an elevated condition of society—it pre-supposes that men are capable of governing themselves—it pre-supposes that the people are elevated and understand the laws of the land, and are willing to be governed by those laws. The people are the law-makers—the sovereignty is with them—as this is the case, a republican government cannot exist, only in name, when there is not general information, and submission to the laws of the land.

If the people trample on the laws of their own formation, through the force of ignorance or the power of mobs,

they are reduced to anarchy—all government is gone—law is prostrate, and a republican government is then the very worst of governments—a monarchy or even despotism is better than anarchy.

An ignorant people under a republican government will suppose they are at liberty to do any thing their depraved passions dictate. "Well," said an Irishman lately landed on our shores, "I am glad I've got to America, where they don't hang folks for killing one another." The true secret of liberty can never be understood by an ignorant people—our government in its present form cannot continue without a more extensive diffusion of knowledge. We have every reason to suppose that a large part of our legal voters, have not information enough to understand the genius of our government—our schools are the essential principles of our government; they are the standing armies of the nation, and unless they arrest the tide of ignorance and violence that is sweeping over the land, we shall go down, we shall sink as a nation never to rise from the ruins of anarchy, to the great joy of the despotic governments of the old world.

The food of the mind is knowledge; it cannot expand and arrive at any thing great and good without it. The wheels of society would roll back to barbarism in half a century, without the diffusion of knowledge, and the forms of religion would cluster around the old mother of devotion, while its spirit would ascend the skies to enjoy the knowledge of God.

Is not unrestricted discussion the means of diffusing knowledge? Are not all our institutions of learning started by an enquiry into their importance, by reasoning, by exhibiting facts, by appealing to the community on the

benefits of learning? Do not our common schools, academies, colleges and seminaries all rise up from the impulse of free discussion?

You know the distinguished man by the power of whose eloquence, and the cogency of whose debate, the avails of the western lands belonging to this state, were secured forever as a fund to support our common schools. His manly enquiry—his powerful discussion is felt to this day, and will be felt as long as the system of free schools in Connecticut exists, to diffuse among all classes the elements of knowledge. And what has been the primary impulse of the schools, colleges, and seminaries, that within a few years past, have sprung up like magic in the great valley of the west? Have the men intent on gain by speculation in western lands, poured their money into the treasury for the establishment of the institutions of learning? Have the settlers, being impressed with the importance of education, risen up as by a simultaneous impulse, and united their energies to secure the benefits of learning? They have scarcely thought of learning in their haste to be rich.

But such men as Beecher and Blackburn have passed through the Atlantic states, and lifted up their voices like a trumpet, and reasoned with us about the condition of our country, and the balance of power moving to the west. They have convinced us of the importance of diffusing information, to counteract the alarming spread of Romanism; to provide an effectual antidote for the deep-seated ignorance that threatens to press on the freemen of the west.

They have plead the cause of the west in our churches, and roused the people to provide them the means of enlightening the present thousands, and the future millions of that

great valley. Open discussion has been the main spring of every literary enterprize that adorns our country, and secures the operation of principles that are the life of a republican government.

And how much information has been diffused in the hundreds of lyceums that have sprung up in all parts of the country! Many young men in these institutions have been raised from the obscurities of ignorance, to the attainment of knowledge, which has rendered them ornaments in society, and blessings to the country.

*Again. The diffusion of knowledge is equally important to the enjoyment of true liberty in religion.* Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But the spirit of the Lord does not operate on the murky vapours of ignorance; for truth and knowledge are the instruments for the demonstration of his power. Through all the dark ages of ignorance, a debasing superstition reigned over the human mind on the subject of religion. The mind was in bondage for lack of knowledge. The purifying and elevating nature of religion was not apprehended. The old mother of devotion had more followers than she could number. The Bible was thought to be too sacred a book for the common people to read. Knowledge was considered a dangerous thing for them to possess. The heavenly principles of religion were enveloped in a fog of heathenish philosophy. Roll after roll of tradition was gathered to befool and mislead the people. The doctrines of the Bible were perverted. Human merits were placed in the room of the atoning merits of Christ; and religion existed only in name, while its spirit and form were gone. Religious liberty was then unknown. The mind was oppressed with a load of superstition; the people knew nothing but what they learned from the dictum of a cor-

rupt priesthood. But what lifted this veil of delusion from the human mind, and scattered it on the wings of the wind, and brought in the elements of knowledge to liberate and purify? The power of discussion unlocked the suppressed fires of truth and let it blaze in every direction, to chase the volume of darkness from the territories of Christendom, to its more appropriate dwelling in the savage parts of the world.

Religion never has exerted its native power on mankind, when they have been compelled to receive it on trust, and when they have been chained down to stereotype forms and phrases, that lulled the mind to rest, and created a superstitious veneration for the doctrines and the usages of the church, that were little understood and less felt in their operations in practical life. In no part of the world has religion exerted so much power over society for good, as in New-England. And in no part of the world have all the doctrines, principles, and duties of religion been so much subjected to free discussion. It has, indeed, at times produced commotion, and even alarm, for there is nothing so mighty in the moral world, as the agitation of truth and error; but the storm has always died away in a little time, and the elements have again settled into peace, and our moral atmosphere has become clearer and brighter by the very causes that surrounded it with darkness.

*Section 3d. Unrestricted discussion is the great conservative principle against error, guarantied in the act of religious toleration.* True religion in this land is placed in awful jeopardy by the act of toleration. But the very act that exposes to danger, provides a principle of safety, an antidote against sluggishness, and creates the most powerful motives to activity in defence of the truth.

Free discussion, granted to all, is a much better source of defence to true religion than the patronage of government. Let truth, unshackled by human legislation, and attended by prayer and the energies of the spirit, meet all the forms of error on the field of action, and it has nothing to fear. *We see infidelity increasing*; there are thousands who care but little about the Bible; who regard it as a cunningly devised fable; who scoff at its sacred principles; who deny the Lord that bought them; who trample on the day of rest, and every thing dear to the christian. But would we have infidelity arrested by the force of law, or the violence of mobs? No, never! If the authenticity and inspiration of the Bible are not capable of perfect demonstration in the mathematics of morals and theology, then let infidelity triumph! Let the Sabbath be blotted out, or be mingled with the days of a heathen calender! Let the Christian ministry be swept away and its name become a by-word in the earth! Let our Sabbath schools be broken up—our Bible classes disbanded—our churches dissolved, and even the *sacred name*, endeared to thousands, cast out as evil, rather than attempt to put down infidelity by civil law or riots. If infidelity can live amid the sun-light of Christian discussion, then let it live.

*And universalism too*, the twin-brother of infidelity, is abroad in the land. Hundreds of their churches stand in this land of the Pilgrims to embolden all the wicked against the fears of hell; to destroy the restraints of the eternal world; to teach the drunkard, the thief, the liar, the prostitute, the lawless, the murderer, and the whole ungodly world, that all will be well with them when they die! Scores of persons are employed to scatter their poison from one end of the land to the other; to dissipate the fears of the world to come; to exert the most pernicious



cious influence on the minds of youth. Hundreds of their preachers are engaged in establishing their doctrines by conversation, lecturing, and preaching ; doctrines, which, if they should become universal, would unhinge all society, and take away all security for peace and good order. And yet I never heard of their being molested by brute force, nor the arm of the civil law. Nor do we desire to have them denied the least privilege, granted to all denominations in the act of religious toleration. Let universalism be undermined by the force of truth, and we have reduced it to nothing. Let us have the privilege of laying open its demoralizing tendencies ; its contradictions, absurdities and blasphemies, and if there are any persons in the community, that will put themselves under the influence of such a system for destruction, we are sure they would be ruined by something, even if this vehicle to hell were not in their way.

*And Romanism too*, by the act of toleration has come in upon us like a flood. It is said that more than two millions of the sons of the Pope are now in the United States. Their churches are found in all the cities of the union. Their seminaries and nunneries are rapidly increasing. Almost every vessel that lands on our shores from the old world, brings great numbers to increase the power of mystical Babylon—to suppress the light of intelligence and free enquiry among the common people, and to forge the fetters of ignorance and delusion. Romanism has always been the enemy of civil and religious liberty—it has always been a persecuting church. The blood of millions has been shed by the fierceness and terror of its spirit. The shrieks of infants and children have rent the air as they gathered around the fagots of persecution, and looked on their Father in the midst of flames that

consumed his flesh and bones in their very presence. All the tortures the "infernal machine" could inflict, have been felt by millions in Europe, where Romanism is now becoming an abomination; and in consequence thereof, is trying to establish her dreadful power amid the liberties of America. Fearful are her strides in the valley of the West, and alarming her power to the nation! But shall we invoke the interposition of civil laws to stay this mighty flood of error? Shall we intoxicate the lowest orders of the community, and inflame their passions to madness, and set them on to this mother of abominations, so hostile to all our civil and religious institutions? No, never! If it can live and thrive in the midst of the light and conflicts of liberty, let it live and let it thrive, even if the very hills and plains, that were bathed by the blood of our fathers, are again moistened by the blood of their children, a sacrifice to papal power. Let there be one experiment fully tried in this western world, whether the true religion can live in the midst of the swelling floods of error without the aid of civil law.

*Section 4th. Free discussion gave birth to the independence of this nation.* This, perhaps, may appear to be a strange sentiment to some, who have in their minds always connected our national freedom with the battle-field, the blood of the slain, the roar of cannon, the splendid spectacle of war. But what put all this sublime spectacle in motion? What led the Fathers and the Sons to leave their wives and their sisters in a defenceless home, and press on with the tread of vengeance and the heart of lions to face the gathering enemy? It was the story of their wrongs that had been discussed in the councils of the colony, and spread before the minds of a people, the purest and noblest that were ever gathered on the face of

the earth. They could understand the force of an argument, the power of discussion, and feel the torture of the deprivation of human rights, which roused the determined purposes of freedom. It was the discussion of such sentiments as the following, and the sincere conviction of their everlasting truth and justice, that roused the nation to the splendid effort of liberty—

“ We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, and endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights ; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed ; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute new governments, laying its foundations on such principles, and organizing its powers in such forms, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. The history of the present king of Great Britain, is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object, the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world. He has refused his assent to laws the most wholesome and necessary for the public good. He has obstructed the administration of justice, by refusing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers. He has deprived us, in many cases, of the benefit of trial by jury. He has plundered our seas ; ravaged our coasts ; burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people. He is at this time transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of perfidy and cruelty, scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous

ages; and totally unworthy the head of a civilized nation. A prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people. We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in general Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do in the name and by the authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that these united colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states."

These were the sentiments discussed in the most manly and independent manner by Hancock and Adams, Jefferson and Washington, Sherman and Franklin, and emanating warm from their patriotic hearts, they awakened the fire of liberty from Maine to Georgia, and nerved every arm for battle, victory, independence.

Had there been a standing army of mobocrats in the country, equipped with their usual weapons, sufficient to have suppressed the discussion of those righteous principles, which are the foundation of our nation's honor and greatness, the people would never have been roused to the mighty effort of freedom. The manly independence of thought, the power of debate, the fire of eloquence, preceded the marshalled army and the roar of cannon, and determined every heart to die on the battle field, rather than submit to such injuries and the deprivation of human rights. Our Fathers were men of *principle*. They feared God and regarded the rights of man. They lived, they bled, they died, for the welfare of their children, and for all future time. New-England can boast of an ancestry whose virtues and intelligence are not equalled by any other nation.

"New-England! in thy bosom the Pilgrims are sleeping,  
 'Mid the thanks and the honors of the sons they have blest;  
 Land of the free, how the nations are keeping  
 Their watch on thy day star to guide them to rest."

"The puritan was made up of two different men. The one all self-abasement, penitence, gratitude, passion. The other, proud, calm, inflexible, sagacious. He prostrated himself in the dust before his Maker, but he set his foot on the neck of his king. In his devotional retirements, he prayed with groans, convulsions, and tears. He heard the lyres of Angels on the tempting whispers of fiends. He caught a gleam of the beatific vision, or woke screaming from the dreams of everlasting fire. Like Vane, he thought himself entrusted with the scepter of the millennial year. Like Fleetwood he cried in the bitterness of his soul, that God had hid his face from him. But when he took his seat in the council, or girt on his sword for war, these tempestuous workings of the soul had left no perceptible trace behind them. People who saw nothing of the godly but their uncouth visage, or heard nothing from them but their groans and their whining hymns, might laugh at them; but those had little reason to laugh, who encountered them in the hall of debate or in the field of battle. *These fanatics* brought to civil and military affairs a coolness of judgment, and an immutability of purpose, which some writers have thought inconsistent with their religious zeal; but which were in fact the necessary effects of it. The intensity of their feelings on one subject made them tranquil on every other. One overpowering sentiment had subjected to itself pity and hatred, ambition and fear.

"Death had lost its terrors and pleasure its charms.

'They had their smiles and their tears, their raptures and their sorrows, but not for the things of this world. Enthusiasm had made them stoics ; had cleared their heads from every vulgar prejudice and had raised them above the influence of danger and corruption. It sometimes might lead them to pursue unwise ends, but never to choose unwise means. They went through the world, like the iron man Talus, with his flail crushing and trampling down oppressors, mingling with human beings, but having neither part nor lot in human infirmities."

Such, my young friends, was the character of the Puritans, our noble ancestors, drawn by the impartial hand of a churchman. It is an honor to be the descendants of such an ancestry. It is no ordinary blessing to inherit their principles and their virtues. Let us revere their memory ; let us cherish the sacred principles of civil and religious freedom, which they defended to the last moment of mortal life, and in the rectitude of which they ascended to heaven. Let us never be recreant to those great conservative principles of this wicked world, but defend them at whatever cost or peril, as our Fathers did, as life's benefit and the world's hope : as the only principles worth living for, and the only principles that can convert the terror of death into the Christian triumph of faith.

*Section 5th. Unrestricted discussion is essential to secure the healthy action of our ecclesiastical and civil judicatories.* All official bodies in this country, whether in religion or government, are the creatures of the people, and as a matter of course they will partake of the character of the people. If public opinion is in a healthy state ; if correct principles prevail among the people ; then those principles will govern and control the decisions of our public bodies, which emanate from the people. But

if public sentiment is corrupt, then our official bodies as a general thing will partake of their character.— You see this principle illustrated in the old adage, “like people like priest.” If a congregation sink down into universalism, or any gross error, they will secure a pastor of like principles. The man they elect to the pastoral office will be the representative of their religious character. Now suppose the whole religious community were under the influence of corrupt sentiments; suppose they had embraced opinions, subversive of the gospel. How could we correct this state of things? We could not send the people teachers of the pure gospel, for they would not receive them. They have the liberty of choosing their own pastors, and they will reject those whose sentiments are repugnant to their own. And suppose a decree should go forth from the high places of power, that the existing sentiments and practices in religion should not be disturbed. Suppose it were plead that they had been of long standing, and had received almost the universal suffrage of the community, and the people were very well pleased with the religious aspect of things, and would not have them discussed. They might plead that the people were united in their views and practices, and to call them in question by the power of discussion would produce commotion, strife, debate, and all uncharitableness. If free discussion were prohibited, the corruption in religion would continue. The evils would deepen and spread, till the last relic of genuine religion was destroyed among the people by the noxious exhalations from the stagnant waters of death.

Such was the state of religion from the tenth to the fifteenth centuries. Free enquiry was prohibited among the people, and as a direct consequence the healthy tone

of public sentiment was gone, and their cardinals, bishops and ecclesiastics, composing their religious judicatures, became awfully corrupt, and their decisions exerted the most pernicious influence on the interests of the community. The Bible was locked from the mass of the people in an unknown tongue; an ignorant and licentious priesthood dealt out to the people the dogmas of the mystical Babylon, the mother of harlots and abominations. Darkness that had been accumulating through the leaden movements of centuries, brooded over the land, and gross darkness settled on the minds of the people. Corruption, chaos, and every moral disorder mingled around the Pope in horrible concert to destroy the purity of religion. But at length there arose a man who asserted the right of free discussion. Luther began while in the cell of a monk to study the Bible, the fountain of light and intelligence. The spirit of God moved on his mind to transform the moral world; not unlike the transformation that was effected when the spirit moved on the face of the great deep and reduced the chaotic elements to order and beauty. As Luther continued to discuss the sacred principles of the word of God, the twinkling beams of light and truth emanated from his pen and his tongue, and the darkness began to retire; the corrupt mass of mind began to move and heave in frightful consternation. The moral elements that moved in profound reverence around the Pope for ages were thrown into uproar. Monks and masses, nuns and friars, cardinals and bishops, monasteries and convents, and the Pope himself, received a shock from the lightnings of Luther, from which they have never recovered. Threats and anathemas, and popish perdition, were hurled at this resolute man in his independent study of the Bible. They tried to poison him;



they excited mobs against him; they imprisoned him, but all in vain. Luther had discussed the principles of Popery, and asserted those rights of enquiry, so terrible to despotism. He had mingled the rays of truth with the wide spread darkness. The time for Zion's deliverance had come. The clear voice of God's providence was heard in the commotions of the papacy. The light that struggled in darkness, began to rise and spread. It illuminated the hills and glaciers of Switzerland. It threw its sacred fires along the banks of the Danube and over its adjacent empires. The lights of science were enkindled in its train. The human mind, that had been so long oppressed with vain traditions, burst the shackles of centuries, and waked up to a spiritual resurrection from the grave of ignorance and sin; and the voice of God's providence from the still whispers of truth, swelled into the loud notes of the triumphs of faith, and announced to the world, the glad tidings—BABYLON IS FALLEN—BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH!!

2d. *We may refer you to another fruitful source of illustration, to the same point, in the late commotions of the Presbyterian Church*—I mean the Presbyterian Church in distinction from the Congregational of New-England. They have a confession of faith which is their bond of union—a confession too, of great excellence "*for substance of doctrine*." But there are some points in it, such as the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity; a limited atonement; natural inability to obey the law of God; and propagated depravity, which the free discussions and the metaphysical acumen of the New-England divines have proved to be incorrect. It is well known that a large part of the Presbyterian Church has been made up

by ministers from New-England ; and they have carried their own views of those subjects into the Presbyterian Church, and have asserted their right to discuss and defend them. As a matter of course they have produced a little commotion, for truth in conflict with error and prejudice always does. But the old school party instead of meeting them on the open field of debate and enquiry, have resorted to ecclesiastical legislation, to put down what they think are errors, in their attachment to some ancient phraseology, which then conveyed a meaning different from what it does now, with a more accurate definition of terms, and a better understanding of the laws of mind. Yet their confused legislation, instead of destroying the views of the new school, or the New-England party, has had a direct tendency to increase them. Presbyteries, and synods, and general assemblies, have condemned Mr. Barnes' theology and his books, but every such condemnation of his works, called out a new edition to meet the demands of the people. While ecclesiastical courts condemned, Mr. Barnes and his party discussed, and enlightened the people: and the people that read and think, sustain the free discussion party, and pay but little regard to the mere dictates of authority, that do not commend their decisions to any man's conscience by manifestations of the truth. I would give much more for the decision of an enlightened and reading people, than for the decisions of any court of dominant ecclesiastics, trampling on natural and constitutional rights, and attempting to suppress free discussion. The judicatories of the Presbyterian Church, have uttered decision after decision, against the errors that have alarmed them, and yet the *errors* live and spread, and they will spread until they are shown to *be errors*, by impartial enquiry and manly argument. It

is wonderful that the people of this republican country, have not yet all learned the lesson that truth alone, brought out to the world by the power of argumentation, can destroy error. You may put down opinions by authority and force, but they will not stay down. Every such effort at suppression, gives them the power, by a little respite, to spring up with greater strength, and spread over the country. But put down opinions by the scintillations of free discussion, and they are dead. They may be raised up again by men who can put forth the decisions of authority with more facility than they can think and reason; but they will ultimately fall into the grave prepared by the power of discussion, without the hope of a resurrection.

*Section 6th. The same course of argument as in the preceding section, will hold true when applied to our legislative and civil tribunals: namely, that free discussion is essential to their healthy action. They are the creatures of the people, and their laws and decisions will correspond to the public opinion of the people. What are the laws of our legislatures but the embodied sentiments of the people? What are the decisions of our courts but the concentrated will of the people? So that public opinion just speaks out through our courts and legislatures. If public opinion is in a healthy condition, our legislative and civil bodies will be. But there never was, and in the nature of things there never can be, a correct state of public sentiment formed in any other way than by the freedom of enquiry and discussion. Look back a few years in the history of our country and what a corrupt state of public sentiment you find on the rum question. All classes in the community demanded a little of the good creature; and such was the popularity of rum with the public mind, that our legislatures very gravely licensed the diffusion of this great blessing in*

obedience to the will of the people. But now all classes in the community, of any worth or respectability, declare that what they licensed is an enormous iniquity. If public sentiment had been in as healthy a state then as it is now, they never would have licensed the evil. But now public opinion is beginning to demand the repeal of the license laws. In many places they are a dead letter, and unquestionably in a few years they will be repealed in obedience to the will of the people—that is, if mobs do not prevent the discussion of intemperance and the immorality of the traffic. Let it be understood that naked legislation accomplishes nothing in destroying evils, till there is a reason for such legislation demanded by the will of the people: and such legislation is never effected till truth and justice have kindled their scorching fires around the evil through the power of discussion. Then the light of enquiry brings all public evils from their dark dwellings, into our halls of legislation in the shape of petitions, and after they have lain on the table or under it a few years, till the cries of their abominations are heard at every window and door of the seats of justice, then, when they are wearied with the influx of petitions indicating the mind of the people, they make legislative enactments bear on the iniquity, and receive the credit for doing what the righteous sentiment of the people compelled them to do.

The courts of the civilized world have pronounced the slave trade to be piracy, utterly inconsistent with justice and humanity. But how were these important decisions brought about? Legislation was not made to bear on the inhuman trade, till Clarkson, and Wilberforce, and their co-laborers in the works of mercy, had toiled through twenty tedious years in exhibiting facts, in reasoning on the cruelty of the treatment of Africans, and in making ap-

peals to the feelings of humanity in behalf of that oppressed race. They reiterated to the world the shocking horrors of the middle-passage. They reminded the civilized-world, how the poor negroes were stolen from the land of their fathers, to gratify the avarice and cupidity of man—how they were manacled and chained together, and crowded into a narrow hole of a ship, not even permitted during a long voyage, to breathe the *pure air* of God's creation, nor to drink the *wholesome water* of his bounty—how they were frequently whipped by brutal traders in human flesh—how they were sometimes thrown overboard and gnashed by the monsters of the deep, till the sea literally turned red with their blood—how others were landed in slave-holding regions, and driven to the field of labor like beasts of burden, and there compelled, by the force of the whip, to labor without compensation, and live without the least cultivation of mind, and sink at last into the grave, ignorant of their relation to God, and the events of the eternal world.

Clarkson and Wilberforce recited to the world this tale of woe; they prayed over the wrongs of the colored man; they mingled their tears with their midnight orisons to heaven, that God in mercy would interfere, and lead man to love his fellow-man and treat him as a brother. Their prayers, their tears, their facts, the recital of human wrongs, moved the nation in sympathy, and that moved the omnipotence of the British Parliament, to pronounce the slave-trade to be piracy, utterly inconsistent with the laws of God, the mercy of the gospel, the feelings of humanity. Was it not free discussion that secured this salutary, benevolent act of the Parliament, in which the christian world rejoice? Had the voice of enquiry been hushed, that inhuman, revolting trade had never received its merited reprobation, by the courts of civilized man.

*Again.* The 1st of August, 1834, the British Parliament pronounced another decision, which has gladdened the hearts of thousands. They decided that eight hundred thousand slaves in the West India colonies were free, and should be elevated to the rights and the proper dignity of humanity. But how was that act secured? Such sentiments as the following, were rung by the heart of tenderness, and the tongue of eloquence in the ear of the British nation:

“There is no class of sufferers in the British dominions, who have stronger claims on our sympathies, than the negro slaves. There are some who affect to ridicule the sensibility of those who mourn over the negro’s wrongs. I pity such, whether the fault is in their understandings or hearts. Are the charities of our natures to be guided by the color of the skin? Does not a human heart beat in his bosom, and human blood flow in his veins? Has he not the affections, the antipathies, the joys and sorrows, the hopes and fears, which are common to humanity? Is he not a man possessing rational faculties, and an immortal soul, capable of being prepared for all the bliss of heaven? But it is said the enslaved negroes are degraded to a point below our sympathy. And how are they so degraded but by that debasing system, which prevents the introduction of knowledge to the understanding—which obstructs the exercise of every virtuous affection; and which inflicts on their minds injuries, more serious and deplorable, than even those which their bodies suffer. On account of this degradation, therefore, they are entitled to the greater commiseration. How unchristian is that selfishness which turns away from the consideration of the miseries of others! Like the Priest and the Levite, who, to spare themselves the pain of feeling for the wounded Samaritan,

and the trouble of helping him, they passed by on the other side. God has given the power of sympathy to man, that every sufferer might have an advocate in the heart of his fellow-creature: and he who attempts to repress his sympathies, sins against the law of his nature, and endeavors to frustrate the kind intentions of his Creator. We must not allow our charities to be exhausted while a sufferer remains. By cherishing a lively commiseration in our minds, others will catch the emotion and that general and powerful feeling, in which alone, under God, the help of the negro is placed.

“While you are enjoying the blessings of freedom, think of those who are toiling in bondage. While you behold your children with all the fondness of parental affection, and form your plans for their future welfare, Oh! think of those whose infants are born to the sad inheritance of slavery; who belong not to their parents but their masters; whom neither a father’s love, nor a mother’s fondness can rescue from the iron grasp of oppression. Think on their unrequited toil; their constant exposure to cruel punishments and brutal insults. Think of the deep degradation to which these human beings, heirs with ourselves of immortality, are reduced; spoiled of their rights, and suffering intolerable wrong. And in realizing with compassion and tenderness their unhappy condition, you will obey the injunctions of the divine word, ‘remember them that are in bonds as bound with them.’ ”\*

It was the reiteration of such sentiments to the British people, that roused the energies of the Parliament and led to the memorable act of the 1st of August, when the chains fell from eight hundred thousand human beings, and the joyful children of more joyful parents mingled their tears of gra-

titude together, that the days of their mourning and separation were ended. Memorable day to the slave! Honorable to the British nation! a day whose acts will brighten the future page of history, and stand prominent with our fourth of July, as beacons of liberty to startle the monarchs of despotism, and urge the world forward to the attainment of freedom. We trust we have sufficiently proved and illustrated the sentiment, that unrestricted discussion is essential to secure the healthy action of our ecclesiastical and civil judicatories.

### REMARKS.

1. *From the preceding discussion, it is evident that the suppression of free enquiry in any country, opens the way for despotism in government, and corruption in religion.* Mr. Barnes says, "The most appalling danger that threatens our country, is the threatened restrictions of the rights of free discussion. This right is secured to us by the God that made us, and is inwrought into all the elements of freedom and accountable moral agency. God has given us the right to examine all things, and investigate all opinions in science and morals. Where is liberty when one half the nation refuse to their brethren, the rights of the freest enquiry into all that pertains to the national character, morals, liberty and welfare? The pulse of freedom beats languid, when you diminish this right. It sends forth vigorous tides of health and life, only when it is conceded that all things may be examined. The most ominous feature in our times, is that this right has been called in question, and that it has been met with so much timidity, and so much yielding, and so much compromise by those who should bleed and die, rather than for a moment surrender this elementary principle of liberty." Mr. Bacon says, "the South have demanded that to the main-



tenance of their system of slavery, the liberty of the press, the liberty of speech and discussion, and the liberty of voluntary associations for purposes not unlawful, shall be sacrificed. They have demanded that mobs, trampling down order and law, shall suppress such discussions and associations, as bear unfavorably upon that system; and—shame to human nature! men have been found, who breathing our free air and walking among our fathers' graves, have been ready to give to such demands an approving answer. This slavery we are told is no concern of ours, and none among us has a right to speak of it: as if we were not born of woman; as if the blood in our veins was not kindred to human nature. No concern of ours! Providence is teaching us another lesson. Those that cannot feel the tie of brotherhood that binds them, alike to the lordliest oppressor and the meanest of his slaves, may be touched where they can feel. If the doctrine of the South is to be admitted and established, Turkey is more free than New-England." Dr. Channing says, "the last few months have increased my anxiety for the country. Public sentiment has seemed to me to be losing its healthfulness and vigor. I have seen symptoms of the decline of the old spirit of liberty. Servile opinions have seemed to gain ground among us. The faith of our fathers in free institutions, has waxed faint and is giving place to despair of human improvement. I have seen a disposition to deride abstract rights; to speak of freedom as a dream, and of republican institutions as built on the sand. I have perceived a faint-heartedness in the cause of human rights. The impious doctrine that human laws can repeal the divine; can convert unjust and oppressive power into a moral right, has more and more tinctured the style of conversation and the press."

The sentiments of these distinguished men will find a response in the heart of every son of liberty. They are sentiments sustaining the great principles that lie at the foundation of all that is dear to us as citizens of this country and inhabitants of this world. Let the voice of enquiry be hushed and the freedom of the press be denied, and the way is open for the most unlimited corruption and despotism. To illustrate this, suppose that king Alcohol, after he had reigned undisturbed for more than forty years in this country, had asserted the right of universal dominion, and of appointing his successors in office for all future generations. No one will doubt that he might have made out a strong case, even for such exorbitant demands. He might have plead the obsequiousness of public opinion—his right to reign was not questioned—all ranks and conditions of men were well pleased with him: he might have plead the universal consent of this republican government, and that he was no usurper. He did not invade this country by fleets and armies—he did not ascend the throne through fire, and blood, and the sword, but the people put him into office in the exercise of their constitutional rights, and they did not limit the time of his reign, but he was permitted to hold his office during good behavior—and he might have plead that at the end of forty years he behaved as well as he did during the first year of his reign; and not only so, he had greatly improved in his character, and in his means of cheering up the hearts of his subjects, in securing the bliss which they seek, and in removing the woes which they dread.

He might have plead that ministers were in favour of him to give force to their sermons—lawyers to give cogency to their debates—physicians to give health to their patients—judges to give wisdom to their decisions—legis-

lators to give spirit and force to their laws—farmers to give strength to the arm—artists and mechanics to give skill to their work—ladies to give fluency to the tongue—travellers to endure the cold of winter, the heat of summer, the dangers of a storm and the *ennui* of a calm, all in short, he might have plead, made liberal offerings at his shrine and fair promises of his support. And further, if he could not have plead the venerable constitution of the country, he could have shown that the laws were in his favour. He could have adduced a statute in his favour from the laws of every state in the union. The case you see was very strong for his undisturbed reign! Now who would dare in the face of law and *gospel*, and public opinion, and self interest and appetite to molest the reign of this great monarch! He held with a firm hand the reigns of universal empire. The wings of his throne overshadowed not only America, but all the civilized nations of the earth. He disdained to reign over the barbarous parts of the world that had never discovered the secret of his power. But all who were elevated from heathenism into a fair understanding of the virtues of his character, might place themselves under his protection and enjoy the plaudits of his throne, and receive a bounty for faithfulness, whatever might be their political views or their religious sentiments!

Who I ask again would dare to invade the prerogatives of this great Monarch? Not Parliament nor Congress, not assemblies nor synods, not churches nor courts, *but an invisible being, born in heaven, the friend of God, the passport of truth, the enemy of unrighteousness, named INVESTIGATION, looked the monarch in his face and discovered that although he was not a usurper, yet he was a vile hypocrite and had deceived the nations of the*

*earth.* Now suppose this friend of God and enemy of unrighteousness, after he had discovered the corrupt character of the monarch, had been required in the name of all the powers of the earth to hold his peace, and not say aught against the customs of the world. Would not the base monarch have ruined the country if he had reigned undisturbed a little longer? He was wasting a hundred millions of our money every year. He sent annually fifty thousand of our countrymen to a loathsome, dishonored grave. He paraded five hundred thousand in the great army of drunkards. He was corrupting the church and the ministry—the bench of justice and the hall of legislation. He was fast undermining the foundations of our government and the whole fabric of social, religious and political interest. He reveled in the woes of the nation and rejoiced in the greatness of its ruin; and there was nothing sufficiently potent to stay the ruinous march of the monarch, but the resistless power of discussion. If this friend of God and man had had restrictions placed on his power, American greatness and American pride had ere this sunk in the vortex of debauchery and infamy, and the world instead of listening to the pæans of our national glory, would have cherished the melancholy remembrance of departed greatness.

2. *Remark.* *There is nothing in any government or religion that can be pure and good, if the freest enquiry into their character may not be allowed.* Wherever there is any custom or doctrine in religion, any principle in morals, or any feature of civil government that may not be freely examined, you may resolve the reason of it into *their corruption*. If justice and truth were their basis, they would love to have them examined, and the story of their worth repeated to the world. Truth and justice

never suffer from investigation, but by careful inspection they commend themselves to every man's conscience and constrain the approval of an enlightened judgment.

You see a merchant, who is unwilling to have his books inspected if there is occasion for it, and you may *guess* that all is not right behind the counter. You see any official body of men, who are unwilling to have their decisions reviewed or published to the world, and you may suspect there is something wrong.

You see any sect in religion who are sensitive on having their character and tenets discussed, and you may judge they are not sound. You see any doctrine or principles in government, the practical effects of which may not be investigated and exposed to the world, and you may know there is some deep seated corruption at work, that shrinks from the light—and this, young gentlemen, is the true secret of all the uproar in the land in discussing the subject of *slavery*. It has become so dreadfully corrupt that it will not bear exposure. Its corruption has extended so much into the free states, that we cannot even discuss it here without exposure to a vile mob. What is slavery?

“*Enslaving men is reducing them to articles of property. Making free agents, chattels, converting persons into things, sinking immortality into merchandize. A slave is one held in this condition. In law he owns nothing, and can acquire nothing. His right to himself is abrogated. If he says my hands, my feet, my body, my mind, myself, they are figures of speech. To use himself for his own good, is a crime. To keep what he earns, is stealing. To take his body into his own keeping, is insurrection. In a word, the profit of his master is made the end of his being, and he a mere means to that end. Man such a thing!* The intrinsic element—the principle of

**Slavery**—men bartered, leased, mortgaged, bequeathed, invoiced, shipped in cargoes, stored as goods, taken on executions, brokered off at public outcry! Their rights, another's conveniences; their interests, wares on sale; their happiness, a household utensil; their personal, inalienable ownership, a serviceable article, or a plaything as best suits the humor of the hour; their deathless nature, conscience, social affections, sympathies, hopes—marketable commodities! We repeat it, the *reduction of persons to things*—not robbing a man of privileges, but of *himself*—not loading him with burdens, but making him a *beast of burden*—not restraining liberty, but subverting it—not curtailing rights, but abolishing them—not inflicting personal cruelty, but annihilating *personality*—not exacting involuntary labor, but sinking him into an *implement* of labor---not abridging human comforts, but abrogating human nature---not depriving an animal of immunities, but despoiling a rational being of attributes---uncreating a *man* to make room for a *thing*.”\* This is American Slavery according to the self-condemning laws of all the slave-holding states: a “domestic institution” of the most revolting licentiousness; a Sodom of impurity; a shocking system of amalgamation: human beings raised for the market, by the horrid sensuality and guilt of the free parents; selling their own *colored* children to the highest bidder in the slave market. A system that destroys the industry and enterprise of half the nation, and converts republican freemen into petty despots. A system that abrogates the marriage covenant, separates husbands and wives, parents and children, to gratify the base cupidity of man. A system that shuts out the light of education, and the gospel from two or three millions of our own

countrymen, and shrouds them in all the darkness and guilt, and pollution of heathenism, and which greatly counteracts our efforts in sending the gospel effectually to bless *other* heathen. A system which creates a perpetual contradiction in our republican government, and must as long as it exists, keep the nation in one continued agitation, unless it destroys our present form of government, and introduces a despotism in its place! No wonder such a system shrinks from the light, and the whole country is thrown into an uproar as its abominations are unfolded. But we hope and pray that the uproar is a glad harbinger of its expiration. The discussion of the iniquitous system must go on, and will go on. Suppress discussion on this subject, and in a little time longer the evil would be so great and complicated, that nothing could overthrow it but the judgments of God, which would overwhelm the nation in ruin, and of our greatness,

“Leave not a trace behind.”

There is in all governments, and in all institutions, such a tendency to evil, that unless constant restraints are imposed by the power of discussion, they soon become so *corrupt*, that they are of no benefit to the world. See illustrations of this in the Popish Church. Freedom of enquiry has been prohibited for centuries, and as a direct result, pure religion is unknown among them. See other illustrations of the sentiment in the despotic governments of the old world. Monarchs have tyrannized over the people and reduced them to vassalage, just as long as they could secure their principles and conduct from investigation. But here in our own country, it is settled as a fundamental principle in government and religion that *all things may be examined*. And this is our only

principle of security for morals, religion, intelligence, and liberty.

### CONCLUDING REMARKS.

We cannot close this dissertation, without calling your attention to the important doctrine which has been attempted to be suppressed by brutal violence, in all parts of the country—the *doctrine of immediate emancipation*. What is it? Is there any thing in this doctrine so obnoxious that the whole land should be roused in wrath to put it down? Is there any thing in this doctrine not supported by our Declaration of Independence, and by the higher authority of the Bible? Is there any thing in it so fearful, that the right of free discussion may not be extended to its friends to explain and support it? My young friends, let me assure you there is nothing in the doctrine of immediate emancipation, when rightly understood, but what every man who loves our Declaration of Independence and the Bible, can love and approve. Immediate emancipation is simply the doctrine of human rights, recognized in our constitution, carried out and applied to all men.

1st. As applied to the slaves in our own country, it does not mean that they should be amalgamated with the white population in marriage. Immediate emancipation, instead of aiming to effect this, will prevent, to a great extent, the shameful amalgamation of whites and blacks that is going on without marriage in our southern country. It is well known to every person who has traveled in the South, and seen the bleached faces of a great part of the slaves, that there is a species of amalgamation there, that should make the whites blush and be ashamed to think themselves men. Emancipation by giving the slaves the pro-



section of law, would expose the persons that violated female purity, which would at once destroy their reputations, and thus it would tend to prevent the crime. But now as the slaves have no rights; no protection from law, the whites are in no danger of having their personal crimes exposed; and as long as this is the case, the pollution will continue. But there is a day coming when those shameful crimes will be brought to light. The judgment day will be peculiarly terrible to slave-holders.

2d. Immediate emancipation does not mean that the slaves should all be let loose without any restraint; to roam over the country and flood the North with them as paupers and nuisances. This is often urged as one of the consequences of emancipation. But do any think that the slaves, who have always been accustomed to the warm climate of the South, would love the cold winters of New-England so much as to pour in upon us in great numbers? But if their masters gave them their freedom, and treated them kindly, and *paid* them for their labor, they would love them and become good citizens, and prefer to remain in the climate they are accustomed to. The only possible motive that the blacks of the South have to run away and come to the North is their slavery—their deprivation of rights. Let emancipation take place, and let the South be as free, as the North, and surely they would love freedom in the place of their birth, as well as in the cold country of the Yankees.

3d. Immediate emancipation does not mean that the slaves should be *instantly* admitted to the ballot boxes, and all the rights and immunities of our form of government. The North have nothing to do with the political rights and privileges of the slaves. Political liberty is something that grows out of human constitutions and legislative en-

actments—the liberty of some particular form of government. And as we have no right to interfere with the legislatures of the South, our doctrine of immediate emancipation does not touch the question of political liberty. What then is the doctrine? We answer;

4th. It is to immediately treat the colored men *as men*, and not as cattle and things. It is to give them the liberty of pursuing their own happiness; the liberty of owning themselves against the possibility of being reduced to brutes and merchandize; the liberty of living together in lawful marriage as husbands and wives; the liberty of parents to educate and direct their own children, and not have them torn from them by a cruel master; the liberty of exercising their minds, the spark of God's image within them; to acquire knowledge, that they may be able to obey the command of God; to "search the scriptures," and learn the way of salvation; the liberty of receiving a fair compensation for their labor. This right to natural liberty is all that is meant by the doctrine of immediate emancipation. The slaves need no previous fitting to enjoy natural liberty. God has fitted them for that in their creation; in making them men, in his own image, and not chattels and things. Gradual emancipation into natural liberty is the greatest of all absurdities; for where can such a process begin? God has *created* all men with natural liberty; so says our Declaration of Independence; in the very act that he has made them moral and accountable beings, and in order to gradually emancipate them into natural liberty, you must go back in the process to some point before their creation; or in other words, you must go and counsel with the Almighty, and have them made with different powers and capacities, so that they may rise into existence fitted to be slaves during

the gradual process of gradual emancipation. But as they are now created; as they now rise into existence immortal, in the image of God, heaven and earth unite to confirm the divine decree—touch not that image as an article of merchandize!—reduce it not to a saleable commodity!

If then God has created men with natural liberty, and one man deprives another of that liberty, he violates the will of God, and it is his duty immediately to restore to the oppressed his natural liberty, the inalienable right of all men. But if the oppressor refuses to do this duty, and still holds his fellow-men in bondage, as property, he sins against the light of nature, the light of revelation, and the God of heaven. Hence the evident truth that all slaveholding is criminal, and ought in justice to come to an end *immediately*.